

Chairman Watson, and the honorable members of the Task Force, I am Doug Sawyer, Chairman Elect for the San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce. The presentation you just witnessed is in our minds a remarkable step in the appropriate direction when discussing the issue of the Chargers and a new stadium. This discussion in our opinion should not be about building a new football stadium it should be about redeveloping an area and creating opportunity. At the Chamber a part of our mission and goals is to help facilitate the process by which San Diego becomes the opportunity capitol of the world. This situation if handled properly could continue to set our City apart from other major metropolitan areas with regard to our vision and creativity as it relates to redevelopment. Redeveloping the current site where the stadium is and creating a situation where people were drawn to the area throughout the year and not just during football season would be another major milestone as the Gaslamp has become for the downtown area.

The Convention and Visitors Bureau, the Sports Council and the Chamber are coming to you as a unified voice of the business community. We are all motivated to help create a solution for this situation because we see the value of the Chargers franchise. We are all motivated by the harsh reality that if we, and if you members of the task force do not look at every possibility, every option, every example from other cities, we could lose a valuable resource. To the Chamber and our friends in the business community the Chargers are not just a football team, they are a employer, they are an entertainment option for our great city, they are contributors to the community as evidenced by their support of the Charger Champions program and their support of the NFL Youth

Education Town teen center. They are an important part of the cog that makes San Diego a major league city and for those naysayers who believe that we would be fine without them they are severely mistaken. It is important that we leave no stone unturned in our search for a potential solution that will enable the residents of this region to continue to enjoy the presence of the Chargers. The Task Force, and City Hall will hopefully, with the support of organizations like those of us who are presenting tonight, continue to be diligent in our efforts and we all remember that this is not a discussion that can be resolved in the press. All of the players involved need to make a definitive commitment to work together to research, debate and explore all possible options.

The loss of a professional football franchise in other cities has always left a hole that demanded to be fixed and to the people in cities like Baltimore, Cleveland, Houston, and St. Louis for example there was only one solution, fill that void by finding another team. What would losing the Chargers mean to the City and the region? It would mean that San Diego State's football future would be placed in jeopardy because it is safe to assume that keeping a stadium the size of QUALCOMM for college football five to seven days a year would not be an option, it would mean that the hundreds of people who are employed by the Chargers on game day would be tasked with finding something else to do to make ends meet, it would mean that the Super Bowl, the world's greatest sporting showcase would never make its way again to our great City. How many Super Bowls have been played in Los Angeles, the second largest television market in the country, since the Raiders left? These are just a few of the negatives that immediately come to mind when you think about what the loss of the Chargers would mean to this region. I

use the phrase region because the Chargers are a “regional commodity” and people from all over the region cheer for the Chargers whether they are at the stadium on game day, in a local pub, or sitting on the couch at home. The support of the Chargers and the interest in this situation is definitely regional.

The presentation made to you by the Sports Council is a great example of forward thinking, and really accomplishes what we declared as a goal in the beginning of this discussion. Our initial thought was that the redevelopment project had to provide something of interest for several different constituencies. A project that “has something for everyone” would be the ultimate desire and whether it is the housing possibilities that intrigue or the river park development that excites you the presentation shows you what can be accomplished with the right perspective. The redevelopment of the site maximizes the use of the current site and more importantly focuses our thoughts on the fact that football is a business not just for the Chargers but for the City as well.

Redeveloping the site creates a much better economic situation for the City in terms of sales taxes generated and potential increases in property tax revenue. In order to ensure success on this matter it is opinion that we should redevelop the site and create a destination point that the entire community can enjoy.

Section regarding answers to the questions from the Task Force

Several questions have arisen about this issue with regard to the business community support of the redevelopment concept and the Chargers. What value does a professional football team provide to the community? In our opinion it is not just about creating an

atmosphere where fans of all ethnicities and gender gather to cheer for a common goal it is about the opportunities that are provided to businesses that benefit from the team whether it is a bar or restaurant that shows Charger games on Sundays, or a souvenir shop that sells shirts and hats, to a mother or father who spends quality time with his/her children before and during a day at the stadium. The redevelopment project increases business community support because it provides business opportunities in the areas of construction, retail, and hundreds of job opportunities for San Diego residents. This is how having the Chargers as an anchor tenant could impact the entire region. There has been plenty of discussion about the business community's support of this process and I think that our commitment is evidenced by our presentation today. Other questions that have been presented center on the business community support or lack thereof of the luxury suites at the current stadium. First, due to the slowing economy where unemployment is slowly creeping up (from 3.7% to 4.1% since the beginning of the year) many of our corporate community partners have made difficult decisions with regard to their expenditure of funds. The stock market has been a roller coaster to say the least and during tough times it is better to protect your employee and your core operation, that means less spending in other areas like entertainment. We are a community that has four fortune five hundred companies and three of the four are current luxury box contributors. The makeup of our business community is diverse with a strong mixture of small and medium size businesses that do not especially in a slow economy have the funds to expend for a luxury item such as this. Another reason that has been stated is that the existing luxury boxes are a concern because they do not all offer splendid views of the game and field. Many of the luxury suites that are available for purchase have view

issues and this works as a deterrent to sales after the prime spots have been sold. This may seem like a minor issue but if you are being asked to pay \$70,000 for a suite to entertainment your employees, and clients you would at least like to be able to see all of the action. It is our belief that a new stadium with a new design would address this issue and would ultimately help improve sales. There has also been discussion about the perceived disconnect between the Charger ownership and the business community. The Chamber has helped facilitate several meetings with members of the business community so that they could hear from Dean Spanos directly about the team and the challenge of operating his business which is the Chargers organization. Several interesting points have been made during these discussions and we are hopeful that the results of these discussions will be greater participation in the future. Although some businesses have chosen not purchase suites many of them do have blocks of tickets that they utilize. In the end we still believe that the economy has more to do with the luxury suite situation than anything else. I can not commit to you that we would, as an organization be willing to get in the business of selling suites to our members but I think that if we proceed with redeveloping the area, the suites and tickets will sell based on the enthusiasm and excitement about the new destination point.

This issue, this discussion and this situation is not foreign to cities across the country. As the presentation showed several other cities have all had to deal with this question and many of them found a way to resolve the matter and create something for both the community and the football franchise. Everyone has different factors that effect their situation and so there is not a one stop solution for every city that has to debate this issue. What we have in San Diego is a community that is watching to see what the next step is

and to see what we can create that will enable us to continue enjoying professional football. If you forget about, for a moment, the ticket guarantee, the lawsuits, the bickering in the press, it all comes down to the question: Are we doing everything possible to keep this important piece of our community fabric in San Diego so that we can continue to enjoy the Chargers and continue to look forward to spending a day with our children and grandchildren at the stadium.

Rather than focus on the past, rather than try to affix blame and rather than looking for a loser to offset every winner, redevelopment of this property focuses on the future. It focuses on finding solutions and focuses on creating a win win situation. A win for the City, a win for the Chargers and most importantly a win for the citizens of San Diego both today and tomorrow.

Thank you for your dedication and diligent work on this defining issue.